



District School Board
Ontario North East

Schumacher Board Office

Street Address

153 Croatia Avenue, Schumacher, ON P0N 1G0

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 1020, Timmins, ON P4N 7H7

705-360-1151

New Liskeard Board Office

198022 River Road

New Liskeard, ON P0J 1P0

705-647-7394

October 29, 2025

The Right Honourable Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

pm@pm.gc.ca and mark.carney@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Doug Ford Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON
M7A 1A1

Premier@ontario.ca

Subject: Support for Nation-Building Investment in 2+1 Highway Upgrades under the Building Canada Act

Dear Prime Minister Carney,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of District School Board Ontario North East (DSB1), I am writing to express our strong support for the modernization of the Trans-Canada Highway (Highways 11 and 17) across Northern Ontario, specifically through the adoption of the innovative 2+1 highway model as outlined in the Building Canada Act.

DSB1's 2025-2029 Strategic Plan is built on three priorities: Achieve, Belong, and Create. These priorities guide our commitment to preparing learners for future success, fostering inclusive communities, and encouraging collaboration and innovation. Safe and reliable transportation is foundational to these goals, ensuring that students can access educational opportunities, extracurricular activities, and community resources without undue risk.

Student safety and well-being are at the heart of our mission. Over 94% of students rely on school buses, with 65% traveling highways daily. The current two-lane configuration of Highways 11 and 17 poses significant risks, with some of the highest collision and fatality rates in Canada. The 2+1 highway model, proven in Sweden and Ireland, offers a cost-effective solution that can reduce fatality rates by up to 80%, improve travel efficiency, and provide safety performance equal to fully divided highways.

Safety: The alternating passing lanes and crash-rated median barriers of 2+1 highways will greatly reduce unsafe passing and head-on collisions, directly protecting students, families, and staff who travel these routes.

Well-Being: Reliable transportation supports student attendance, participation in athletics, and access to post-secondary studies, contributing to overall well-being and achievement.

Achieve · Belong · Create



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Equity: Improved highways connect Indigenous and rural communities to essential services, supporting equity and inclusion for all learners.

Economic and Community Benefits: Upgrading these routes will strengthen supply chains, support local economies, and ensure that Northern Ontario remains a vital part of Canada's national corridor.

On January 21, 2022, DSB1 previously endorsed the 2+1 Roadway Pilot Project for Highway 11 and December 11, 2023, supported legislative efforts to improve road safety, including the prohibition of dangerous passing maneuvers. We reaffirm our preference for the 2+1 model, which balances safety, cost, and community impact, and urge federal and provincial governments to prioritize this approach in upcoming infrastructure investments.

We respectfully request that the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario commit to the nation-building vision of the Building Canada Act by investing in 2+1 highway upgrades across Northern Ontario. This initiative will save lives, support student achievement, and foster thriving, resilient communities.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. Please feel free to contact us for further information or partnership opportunities.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jonathan D Byer

Chair, District School Board Ontario North East

Cc: Steven MacKinnon, Minister of Transportation
Prabmeet Sarkaria, Ontario Minister of Transportation
Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities